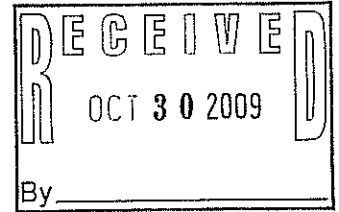


NARRATIVE PROGRESS REPORT



Date Submitted: 10/1/09

Date Reviewed by ICL staff and sent to ITC Rep:

Grant Organization: Kamiah Chamber of Commerce

Grant # 08-11-03

Check one: Interim

Final **XX**

Report Period: From 4/16/09

to 9/30/09

(See Attachment A of Grant Contract for Dates)

Grant Manager: Debbie Evans

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Address: PO Box 697 Kamiah, ID 83536

In the space below or on an attached sheet, answer the following questions for EACH element in your scope of work.

Final -This is your last report. Answer each question by element and project in your scope of work.

Final Report

Element 1 – Advertising

1. What was accomplished?

The newly revamped Kamiah Chamber of Commerce website has received and continues to receive positive comments from locals, visitors and prospective visitors. The user friendly format and increased information available on the website has proven successful in presenting Kamiah as a vacation area. The means to further enhance the website with printable electronic brochures has been obtained and we are in the process of implementing them. Kamiah has partnered with North Central Idaho Travel Association to complete the regional web cast and is involved with the development of the Top 10 Scenic Drives in the Northern Rockies brand strategies. Once completed the Kamiah Chamber of Commerce website will link with and feature these two entities.

Requests for printed information about Kamiah continue through email, mail and telephone requests. It was anticipated that the postage amount associated with these requests would decrease however in 2008 the number of these requests remained the same.

Kamiah continues to be in the forefront of regional promotion of the Upper Clearwater Valley. The "Top Things to Do in Idaho's Upper Clearwater Valley" brochure has proven to be both popular and successful. By accident Kamiah developed a "Kamiah Brand" when preparing the logo for the book bags presented to the Idaho Travel Council members at the Idaho Conference on Tourism in May 2009. This "brand" has since been expanded to a refrigerator magnet that drives people to the Kamiah website which has been distributed through registration packets for two events held in Kamiah this summer and through a "friends and family" campaign during the annual Kamiah BBQ Days celebration during Labor Day weekend.

2. How did it promote travel in Idaho?

It is our observation that instead of technology replacing hard-copy requests it has added to them.

In the past a single community has not had the attractions to engage a visitor for more than a few hours in passing. Taking a regional approach to advertising has broadened the offerings for prospective visitors. Creating a friendly reminder of what a great time you had in Kamiah while attending a group event has

been well received. Visitors receiving these magnets have requested "seconds" so that they can share them with their friends at home. They have stated that they plan to return on independent vacations and this will be the tool they will use to check up what is happening in Kamiah as they begin planning. A by-product of the "friends and family" is renewed community pride and has served as gentle reminder to our residents of what a great place they live, work and play in. In fact, that was the theme of the annual Kamiah BBQ Days and the "brand" was the logo. We are anxious to see what the results of this new approach and awareness will be.

3. Provide statistical information and what evaluation technique was used to determine.

As the economic downturn continues North Central Idaho residents and businesses braced themselves for the worse – reduced tourism on top of job loss. Reduced tourism didn't happen. After a slow start Upper Clearwater Valley lodging owners have reported record numbers of visitors coming and staying. The no vacancy sign has been lit at all Kamiah motels on several nights, sometimes days at a time and not just during peak holiday weekends. Lodging, food, gas and souvenir purchases were up. Merchants reported that even when the mill closed down their sales did not slump as expected. The grocery store parking lot was full; cars, trucks, motorcycles and a variety of "toys" at the gas pumps; and even a line to check out at the hardware store. "Heads-in-beds" revenue figures support this. As witnessed by guest book sign-ins, the Kamiah Chamber Welcome Center had about the same number of visitors January – May 2009. June – September visitation increased by about 20%. We had to buy a new guest book. One observation, the demographic of the visitor is changing. The retirees, young and not-so-young are still coming but the medium age is dropping. Fisherman on the banks of the river now include young to mid thirties, mostly men but the women are gaining, professionals and from less than a days travel time away. More families are beginning to arrive and stay for a few days.

4. List any recommendations for project improvement.

North Central Idaho and the Upper Clearwater Valley region continue to struggle with the lack of technology and broadband capabilities. Great strides have occurred in the past year but what is available still does not compete with what is marginally accepted elsewhere. In order to be competitive this shortfall must be addressed.

Element 2 – Industry Leadership & Education

1. What was accomplished?

Kamiah continues to network with the North Central Idaho Travel Association, the Northwest Scenic Byways Core Management Team, and collaborating on the Top 10 Scenic Drives in the Northern Rockies promoting regional tourism. Two representatives from Kamiah were able to attend the Idaho Governor's Conference on Tourism. Presentations at that conference were very information and quickly pointed out that the Upper Clearwater Valley region needs to expand its technological understanding and capabilities to be competitive in the tourism market.

2. How did it promote travel in Idaho?

At the conference networking with other communities that have faced or are facing similar issues and with state agency personnel that we have only talked to on the phone but never meant has proven invaluable.

3. Provide statistical information and what evaluation technique was used to determine.

It is too early to measure the impact of attending the conference. It is our intent to participate in 2010.

4. List any recommendations for project improvement.

Kamiah is one of the few communities represented at regional and state meetings, trainings and conferences. Manpower, jobs, travel time, travel logistics and financial restraints hinder participation

especially for the smaller communities. Rotating these meetings, trainings and conferences to other parts of the state would be very beneficial. It would give these communities a better chance to be represented and if located in their communities would give them the opportunity to showcase their area and get an economical boost at the same time.

Element 3 – Capital Outlay

This element was not funded ITC in 2008 nor 2009. The need to move forward in WiFi and Site Development continues. Although North Central Idaho has sustained and grown their "heads in beds" revenue, lack of capacity hinders tourism opportunities in Kamiah and within the region. Kamiah will continue to pursue solutions to this issue independently but it will not be solved without assistance.